

Message Text

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70

ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-12 COA-02 RSR-01 /110 W
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R 142315 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0031

INFO AMCONSUL BELIZE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L GUATEMALA 2885

E. O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR GT BH UK

SUBJECT: PROTEST AGAINST GUATEMALAN PRESENCE IN BELIZEAN WATERS

REF: BELIZE 285

1. BRITISH CONSUL JOHN WEYMES, WHO JUST RETURNED FROM CONSULTATIONS IN BELIZE WITH PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY KERSHAW, HAS INFORMED US THAT HE IS CURRENTLY AWAITING INSTRUCTIONS FROM LONDON TO PROTEST TO GOG OVER PRESIDENT ARANA' S FISHING TRIP TO BELIZEAN KEYS DURING WHICH HE ACCOMPANIED BY TWO NAVAL PATROL BOATS AND ARMED GUARDS.

2. WEYMES SAID THAT HIS VISIT TO BELIZE HAD BEEN STORMY, AS OFFICIALS OF GOBH, INCLUDING PREMIER PRICE, WERE HIGHLY INDIGNANT OVER GUATEMALAN INCURSION, CALLING IT " MAJOR INCIDENT" AND DEMANDING STRONG BRITISH PROTEST ON THEIR BEHALF. WEYMES SAID GOBH OFFICIALS MAINTAINED THAT ARANA VISIT WAS DELIBERATE ATTEMPT TO " STIR UP TROUBLE" AND WEYMES HAD DIFFICULT TIME ATTEMPTING TO CONVINCE THEM THAT THIS WAS NOT TRUE. (WE KNOW GUATEMALANS ARE NOT LOOKING FOR TROUBLE- THEY WANT TO KEEP BELIZE ISSUE AS QUIET AS POSSIBLE DURING
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PRE- ELECTORAL PERIOD.) AS RESULT STRONG REPRESENTATIONS MADE BY GOBH OFFICIALS, WEYMES SAID, CABLE WAS SENT TO LONDON BY KERSHAW ASKING FOREIGN OFFICE TO INSTRUCT WEYMES TO MAKE APPROPRIATE PROTEST TO GOG. WEYMES SAID CABLE SUGGESTED THAT PROTEST BE AIMED AT UNAUTHORIZED PRESENCE GUATEMALAN PATROL BOATS IN BELIZEAN WATERS AND PRESENCE ARMED GUATEMALAN GUARDS ON HUNTING KEY, RATHER THAN FOCUS- SING ON PRESENCE OF ARANA. HE NOTED THAT HE WAS GLAD SUG- GESTION WAS THAT HE MAKE PROTEST RATHER THAN GOING MORE FORMAL ROUTE THROUGH SWISS, WHO REPRESENT GUATEMALAN INTERESTS IN GUATEMALA.

3. WEYMES SAID THAT BRITISH STILL HOPE TO HAVE MEETING IN JULY BETWEEN FONMIN ARENALES AND APPROPRIATE BRITISH OFFI- CIAL TO DISCUSS BELIZE SITUATION. (BRITISH OFFICIAL WAS TO HAVE BEEN KERSHAW BEFORE HE LEARNED WHILE IN BELIZE THAT HE WAS BEING TRANSFERRED TO MINISTRY OF DEFENSE). WEYMES NOTED THAT BRITISH FELT ARRANGING SUCH MEETING SOON WAS VERY IMPORTANT BECAUSE PRICE WAS BECOMING INCREASINGLY IMPATIENT OVER WHAT HE CONSIDERED GUATEMALAN " FOOT DRAGGING" AND BECAUSE OF LACK OF ANY ACTION WHATSOEVER DESIGNED TO FIND EVENTUAL SOLUTION TO DISPUTE. EMBOFF REMARKED TO WEYMES THAT IF PROTEST MADE AND PARTIC- ULARLY IF IT RECEIVED ANY PUBLICITY, ARENALES WAS LIKELY TO BE DISINCLINED TO MEET WITH BRITISH REPRESENTATIVE IN NEAR FUTURE. GDS.
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